

April 4, 1957

**Notes from a Conversation between the 1st
Secretary of the PRL Embassy in the DPRK with the
1st Secretary of the Embassy of the USSR, Comrade
Pimenov of 26-27-28-29.III.1957**

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Summary:

Brzezinski Henryk and Comrade Pimenov discuss political groups in North Korea, Soviet specialists in the DPRK, the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission, and the reunification of Korea.

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N o t e

From a conversation with the 1st Secretary of the Embassy of the USSR, Comr. Pimenov of 26-27-28-29.III.1957

In February Comr. Pimenov had asked me whether he could go with me to our Mission in Panmunjeom. After discussing this matter with Comr. Brzostowski, we agreed on a date to visit the mission, 26-29 March 1957.

During the journey, as well as at the destination in Panmunjeom, the following issues were brought up with Comr. Pimenov:

1. The issue of groups within the leadership of the DPRK.

Comr. Pimenov brought up the issue of Heo Ga-i [Ho Ka I] (secretary of the C[entral] C[ommittee], who after the 4th plenum (toward the end of the war) had been accused of wanting to appropriate power for himself in the DPRK. Heo Ga-i had come from the Soviet Union. The official version of Heo Ga-i's shortcomings spoke of an incorrect attitude toward party discipline and an excessive removal of people from the party. Heo Ga-i committed suicide. The Korean comrades assessed this fact as a deed unworthy of a communist, indicating the fact that Heo Ga-i feared revealing secret matters that burdened him. Shortly thereafter came the issue of the minister of communications Pak Il-u [Pak Il U], who stemmed from the activists who had previously been active on Chinese territory. This minister had been removed and isolated for a certain length of time under house arrest for his attitude to the people who had come from the Soviet Union. Then in 1955 came the case of Vice-minister of Culture Jeong Ryul [Jong Ryul], who promoted that everything that is Soviet is good and right, and rejected and denied the Korean cultural heritage. After the December plenum of the CC in 1955, at which Kim Il Sung sharply condemned such activity, a new vice-minister of culture and science, who had finished the Higher Party School in the USSR, was named.

At the beginning of 1956 sentiments grew against Koreans who had come from the USSR. These sentiments arose among the broad masses and were born from the bottom (in Pimenov's opinion). A consequence of these sentiments was the fact of removals from work and certain harassment of people arrived from the USSR. Comr. Pimenov gave as a reason for this kind of phenomena that people who had arrived from the USSR were being placed in quite well-paying positions, these people did not always behave correctly and differed in their way of life from the nation, which caused frictions. This harassment has currently quieted down, and attempts are being made to correct the harm done to people who returned from the USSR.

After the 20th Congress quite a wide group arose among party activists, which criticized the existing method of placing and educating the cadres and the absence of freedom of discussion in the party. This group spread out its activity widely during the absence of the Korean government delegation in the countries of people's democracies. After the delegation's return, the question of this group's activities was presented to Kim Il Sung. It was intended to summon a plenum at the beginning of August (the delegation returned around July 20). The plenum was put off until the end of August. In this period, those persons among CC members who spoke out in

favor of this group were summoned to the CC. The talks at the CC were conducted had a specific character, with the goal of isolating the active members of the group. In the talks, pressure was exerted on the CC members so that they would not support the slogans of the group. As a consequence of this activity, at the August plenum (30 and 31 August) the members of the group were not permitted to speak at all. There was general shouting[:] off the podium with you! Then during the second day of the plenum's deliberations, four persons from this group fled to China. China, despite a request from the DPRK, did not send these persons back to Korea. At the August plenum, the representatives and sympathizers of this group were condemned very sternly. They were expelled from the party. A special resolution was passed on this subject. The runaways to China reached the CC of China at the times when a Party Congress was taking place in China. Mikoyan and Peng Dehuai arrived in Korea then for an unofficial visit. As a result of the talks that were conducted with the leadership of the DPRK party, a new resolution toward the group was adopted at the September plenum of the CC of the Workers' Party. The people removed (at the August plenum) were admitted into the party and it was agreed that both resolutions toward the group would be published in the press to allow the nation to assess the reasons for the change in position. It was also agreed that those people would not be persecuted. As Comr. Pimenov asserted, this agreement is not currently being honored in the DPRK. The press did not publish the resolutions of both plena, those who spoke up at the August plenum are being finished off by various methods (politically-administratively). Comr. Pimenov responded to the question did the activity of the group die down now? that the topic has quite died down. He then mentioned in this context that Pak Chang-ok [Pak Chang Ok] former vice-premier came from the USSR and Choe Chang-ik [Choe Chang Ik] from China. (both were members of the Political Bureau in the DPRK presidium of the CC).

Following the September plenum the minister of construction Kim Seung-hwa [Kim Sung Hwa] was removed. The Minister of Construction had been part of that group. Because of the widespread popularity of minister Kim Seung-hwa it was not dared to cause any administrative harm to him, he was sent to the higher Party School in the USSR. After the minister's departure articles, which sharply vilified the minister, appeared in the press. Comr. Pimenov stressed that it would not be strange if Kim Seung-hwa were to act like Ri Sang-jo [Ri Sang Jo] (former DPRK Ambassador to the USSR), i.e., ask for asylum.

I am writing this part of my note on the basis of conversations with Comr. Pimenov during the trip to Panmunjeom, as well as from the week before, when I invited Comr. Pimenov to go hunting.

2. Comr. Pimenov, traveling to Panmunjeom, wished to orient himself about how the situation in the NNSC [Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission] presents itself in general outline, how cooperation with the Swedes and Swiss is working out and what issues are currently on the agenda in the Commission.

Minister Brzostowski provided information on this subject. Apart from this, Comr. Pimenov paid a visit to the Korean general Jeong Geuk-rok [Jong Kuk Rok](chairman of the Military Armistice Commission on behalf of the DPRK). General Jeong Geuk-rok told Comr. Pimenov about his meeting with general An of South Korea (October of last year). At this meeting, which was organized with the assistance of the Swedes, several issues were discussed, including the question of reunifying Korea. Jeong Geuk-rok assessed the meeting positively. The meeting lasted one and a half hours. It was decided then that further meetings would take place. No further meetings took place. Jeong Geuk-rok believes that the Americans became mixed up in the matter. The incident with the airplane from the south, which was shot down in the territory of the DPRK also had a certain influence. Jeong Geuk-rok's and Minister Brzostowski's opinions on the issue of conditions present in the DPRK overlapped.

3. On the issue of Soviet advisers present in Korea, Comr. Pimenov emphasized that

the Korean comrades demanded the recalling of nearly all Soviet advisers. Right now there remains an adviser from the State Commission for Economic Planning (until May, the deadline for the development of the 5-year plan) and a military adviser. The military adviser will probably be recalled shortly, and an office of Military Attache will be created.

4. Comr. Pimenov promised to relay data concerning an agreement about scientific-technical cooperation between the USSR and the DPRK. We will be informed what the Korean side demanded and what the USSR can offer.

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6 cops. M[inisterstwo] S[praw] Z[agranicznych—
Ministry of Foreign Affairs] Dep. V

1 cop[y] a/a Brzeziński Henryk

[transl. note: signature]

1st Secretary of the Embassy of the

P[olska] R[zeczpospolita] L[udowa—People's Republic of Poland—PRP] in the DPRK

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